



U.S. Department of Justice

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NEWS RELEASE

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U.S. Department of Energy Employee Pleads Guilty to Theft of Government Property

*--Employee converted 10 government cellular telephones
and distributed them to family members for their personal use--*

WASHINGTON - A 40-year-old U.S. Department of Energy Employee, Alva Yelverton, has pled guilty to one count of Theft of Government Property for converting ten government cellular telephones and distributing them to family members for their personal use, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor announced today.

Yelverton, a U.S. Department of Energy Program Support Specialist, Office of Resource Management in the Office of Policy and International Affairs, entered her guilty plea earlier today before the Honorable Judge Reggie B. Walton in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Yelverton, who faces a statutory maximum sentence of ten years' imprisonment and a likely range of up to six months in prison under the federal sentencing guidelines, is scheduled to be sentenced on August 25, 2009. As part of the plea agreement, Yelverton has agreed to resign from the Department of Energy.

According to the government's evidence, Yelverton began working for the Department of Energy in 2001. Her official title was Program Support Specialist. Her office was located at Department of Energy's Forrestal Building at 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, in the District of Columbia. As a Program Specialist, Yelverton was responsible for, among other things, coordinating office moves, maintaining keys and telephones (for both land lines and cellular phones) in her department. As part of her duties and responsibilities, Yelverton distributed cellular telephones to Department of Energy employees when needed, and was the point of contact for Sprint, the cellular phone service provider for the Department of Energy. Each month, upon receiving the Sprint bills, Yelverton submitted the bills to the Department of Energy's Office of Resource Management for payment. In addition, Yelverton had the authority to order new cellular phones and to add new telephone lines from Sprint on behalf of the Department of Energy.

During the period from March 2006 through August 2008, Yelverton converted ten (10) cellular telephones that belonged to the Department of Energy and distributed them to her family members who then used the government cellular phones for their personal calls. When the monthly Sprint bills arrived, which included unauthorized usage charges for cell phone services by Yelverton and her family members, Yelverton submitted those bills to the Department of Energy for payment. As a result of the unauthorized personal cellular telephone usage by Yelverton and her family members, the Department of Energy sustained losses of approximately \$19,051. Yelverton has agreed to make restitution to the Department of Energy.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Taylor praised the outstanding efforts of Special Agents Amaleka McCall-Brathwaite with the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Energy. He also commended the efforts of Legal Assistants Lisa Robinson and Jamasee Lucas. Finally, he praised the work of Assistant U.S. Attorney Lionel Andre, who investigated and negotiated the plea in the case.

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